

VZCZCXRO1907
RR RUEHVK
DE RUEHVI #1347 2891232
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 161232Z OCT 09
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3442
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES

UNCLAS VIENNA 001347

SENSITIVE, SIPDIS

STATE FOR OES/EGC, EUR/CE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SENV KGHG ENRG EIND ECON AU

SUBJECT: Austrian Climate Negotiator Pessimistic on Copenhagen,
Assertive re Industrial Interests

REF: A) Vienna 1264, B) State 097542

¶1. (SBU) At a Vienna conference October 12, long-time lead Austrian UNFCCC negotiator Helmut Hojesky gave a highly pessimistic readout of the Copenhagen process following Bangkok. The overarching "crunch point" remains the question of paying for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Until financing is resolved, key countries (China, Mexico, South Korea, South Africa, Brazil, and particularly India) are not willing to commit to binding mitigation measures. Off the record (over lunch), Hojesky added that China appears to be flexible, while India is the real stumbling block.

¶2. (U) Hojesky regretted that the bracketed 800-page negotiating document has hardly been narrowed. A major problem is that negotiations remain on two separate tracks: the Working Group on Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA) and the Working Group on Further Commitments (AWG-KP).

USG "Silence" at Bangkok

- - - - -

¶3. (U) The EU is pressing for a "Single Undertaking" and has been accused by India of trying to "kill Kyoto to serve the interests of the U.S." -- not true, Hojesky emphasized. GoA representative questioned though why the U.S. delegation "remained almost completely silent" in Bangkok. Hojesky -- a 15-year veteran of climate negotiations -- could not perceive any U.S. signals or active participation at Bangkok. The developing countries will only move if the U.S. is willing to put something on the table, he said.

Austria's Interests as Industrial Exporter

- - - - -

¶4. (U) Hojesky detailed Austria's national interests in climate negotiations (emphasizing that these will be discussed within the EU caucus, which will speak with one voice at Copenhagen):
-- Strict adherence to EU criteria for moving from 20% to 30% Greenhouse Gas reduction goals;
-- No competitive disadvantages for Austrian producers -- resorting if necessary to mechanisms such as border tax adjustments;
-- More precise definitions of "comparable emissions reduction" undertakings by industrial countries and the "appropriate contributions" to which developing countries will commit;
-- Measures by developing countries to reduce emissions (compared to trendline/business-as-usual) must be concrete and measurable; and
-- Carbon-sink and land-use abatement projects should support sustainable cultivation;

COMMENT

- - -

¶5. (SBU) Business representatives at the conference portrayed a 30% emissions reduction target (in 2020) as unachievable in Austria or in the EU, and said they are lobbying European authorities not to go beyond 20%. We note that most tenets of Austria's platform imply controversy with developing countries -- but that conflict will play out primarily behind closed doors, since Austria will support the common EU line publicly.

EACHO